

# MARK 2:1-17

## OBSERVATION: WHAT DOES THE PASSAGE SAY?

We have two divisions in this section (1-12 and 13-17), which contain two events: the healing of the paralytic and the association with tax gatherers and sinners.

1. According to verse 1, where was Jesus, what is the time frame?
2. What was Jesus doing when the men tried to get to him? Describe the scene.
3. How did the four men eventually get the paralytic to Jesus? How is the process described?
4. What is the question Jesus asks? What are we told that Jesus notices about them (v. 5)?
5. Who criticizes Jesus and how do they go about it? What is the form of their criticism?
6. How are we told Jesus becomes aware of the questioning scribes?
7. What does Jesus say to the scribes?
8. What does Jesus tell the paralytic?
9. What is the title Jesus uses for himself in this passage?
10. What does the paralytic do and how does the crowd respond?
11. Compare v. 13 (again) with 1:16.
12. Who is Levi? How does he respond to Jesus?
13. Where was Jesus in verses 15ff? Who is with him and what are we told about them?
14. What criticism do the Pharisees bring and what is Jesus' reply?

## INTERPRETATION: WHAT DOES THE PASSAGE MEAN?

1. What is blasphemy and how does Jesus commit that here in from the perspective of the scribes?
2. Why did they feel that God was the only one who could forgive sins? (see Isaiah 43:25). Can anyone else but God forgive sins? What were they concluding and what should we conclude from Jesus' comments in verses 5, 10?
3. Answer Jesus question in v. 9?
4. Is there a connection between physical healing and forgiveness of sins? Compare 1 Corinthians 11:30; 1 Peter 2:24; Isaiah 53:5.
5. Is there a connection between the two events in this section (healing of paralytic and association with tax gatherers and sinners) or are they simply linked together as consecutive and unrelated?
6. What is it about Pharisees and scribes that would make the associations of Jesus an issue?
7. Compare this passage with Matthew 9:12, 13 and Luke 5:31-32. Whose house are we in? Why are so many of these "types" of people following Jesus?
8. What is the underlying attitude of the heart that Jesus reveals in his comment in verse 17?

## APPLICATION: WHAT DOES THE PASSAGE MEAN TO ME/US?

1. The faith of the men drove them to get to Jesus at any cost. How strong is your faith? Do obstacles in your way of faith discourage you from continuing or is your faith strong enough to endure and persevere?
2. Take time today to evaluate yourself and ask for forgiveness? Is there any unconfessed sin in your life? Are there unresolved issues leading to a separation between you and another person? Is there someone you need to forgive?
3. Is there an area in your life that could use healing?
4. What is your attitude toward "sinners"? Is it more like Jesus or more like the Pharisees?

("...it isn't to the palace that the Christ child comes; But to shepherds and street people and hookers and bums; And the message is clear if you've got ears to hear; That forgiveness is given for your guilt and your fear" from the song "Cry of a Tiny Babe" by Bruce Cockburn).

## ACTION PLAN

Spend time personally and with others in coming up with an action plan inspired by your study. What in this passage compels you to desire a change, to move to action, to become more like Jesus. It could be a change in thinking, behavior, character. It could be internal or external. It could be personal or relational. Just don't leave studying the Bible as simply an intellectual exercise.